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ACTION (11040)

THE WHITE HOUSE

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WASHINGTON

July 6, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger 
SUBJECT: International Space Cooperation: US - Soviet Activities

The NSC Under Secretaries Committee has forwarded the second of a series of interagency papers on international space cooperation (Tab D). This paper (Summary at Tab C), prepared by the Ad Hoc Committee on International Space Cooperation, is concerned with the possibilities for future cooperation between the US and the Soviet Union.

The interagency group, taking account of your policy favoring increased international space cooperation, reached general agreement that the prospects for expanding cooperation with the Soviets, in contrast with other countries such as Germany, continue to be limited. There are, nevertheless, a number of areas of space cooperation which could be mutually advantageous and which we could take without harm to our national security interests.

These areas, some of which could be pursued in a multilateral as well as a bilateral context, include the following:

- The exchange of scientific information and experts;
- Coordination of separate national efforts possibly including complementary tasks in unmanned lunar and planetary exploration and other fields of scientific space research;
- Complementary tasks in practical applications of space technology;
- An exchange of astronauts;
- Cooperation in such activities as tracking and communications;
- Projects looking toward improved safety and desirable commonality in instrumentation and operating procedures (e.g., development of compatible docking equipment and communications arrangements for reciprocal space rescue).

While there is agreement within the Under Secretaries Committee as to the desirability of cooperation and the possible scope of cooperation with

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the Soviets, there are differences of view as to the value, prospects and means of attempting to bring the Soviets to useful cooperation in this field.

The report presents three basic options with respect to our effort to achieve cooperation with the Soviets.

Option 1. To curtail our efforts. DOD believes that, after 15 years of trying without significant success to get the Soviets to cooperate, we should pursue a different tack. DOD would not, however, oppose continuing our efforts at their current level for a limited period of time before deciding whether to curtail our efforts or to raise them from the technical to the government-to-government level.

Option 2. To continue our efforts at the current level until they have been fully explored and have contributed further to our understanding of Soviet attitudes towards space cooperation before deciding whether to curtail our efforts or to raise them to the government-to-government level. The Office of Science and Technology, NASA and the Executive Secretary of the Space Council support this option as a means of moving toward a later, more intensive effort at the top level of government.

Option 3. To make a renewed and more intensive effort at the top level of government. State recommends this option, believing that the US will have to increase its effort if there is to be any serious possibility of expanding cooperation. This would include a direct communication from you to Premier Kosygin at an opportune moment. Congressional consultation would be prerequisite to such an initiative. (CIA, the Arms Control Agency and the US Information Agency, though not involved in the preparation of the report, support this view.)

The Chairman of the Under Secretaries Committee, in his memorandum of transmittal (Tab B), adds his personal endorsement to Option 3 and attaches a draft letter for Premier Kosygin.

My own view falls between the positions of NASA and State. While I do not believe you should expend political capital by direct communication with Premier Kosygin at this juncture, I do support the notion of bolstering Dr. Paine's efforts by high-level (but low-key) diplomatic initiatives. My reasoning follows these lines:

- The Soviet space program is controlled largely by the military and there is undoubtedly great reluctance within the leadership to risk

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compromise of military space programs. The marshals are aware that NASA programs are open and that we would expect reciprocal candor. They may be ^{or}willing to make such concessions.


- If the reticence of the Soviet military is to be broached, the pressures to do so are more likely to have effect if they come from the Soviet politicians than from the technicians.
- Although there may be a strong coincidence of interest between technical agencies (NASA and the Soviet Academy) in cooperative ventures, the views on the Soviet side may not be fully supported by the decision-makers. An appeal for cooperation from you to the Soviet leadership, couched in general terms, may go unheeded.
- If the efforts of NASA and State appear to be fruitful and if realistic program opportunities can be identified, you could then solidify our gains by making a concrete proposal to the Soviet leadership.

I recommend, therefore, that you not communicate directly with Premier Kosygin at this time, but that we bolster Dr. Paine's efforts by high-level (but low-key) diplomatic initiatives.

Attached at Tab A is a draft NSDM giving effect to my recommendation by stating (1) that you wish efforts toward US-Soviet space cooperation to be pursued through both technical agency and diplomatic channels, and (2) that if significant progress occurs, you will at a later date consider forwarding a specific proposal to Premier Kosygin.

RECOMMENDATION

That you approve the draft NSDM at Tab A.

Approve Draft NSDM 

Approve Option 1 - Curtailing our efforts _____

Approve Option 2 - Continuing present efforts _____

Approve Option 3 - High level diplomatic effort with letter now from you to Premier Kosygin _____.

Attachments

Mr. Flanigan concurs in the above.

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